

29 MAR 1961

FITNESS REPORTING IN CIA

This is a historical summary of the development of the fitness reporting system in the Agency. Attachment 1 is a chart which briefly describes the various fitness report forms which have been used or considered. Decisions and statements made by the Career Council in the development of a fitness reporting system are briefly summarized below.

I. FITNESS REPORTING 1947 - 1952

1. Civil Service Form 51, "Report of Efficiency Rating", was used to evaluate Headquarters personnel.
2. Agency Form 51-53, "Status and Efficiency Report", was used to evaluate field personnel - this form actually used in many areas overseas until Dec 1954.

It was felt that there was a need for more uniformity in Agency policy and procedures in evaluating personnel.

II. FITNESS REPORTING 1952 - 1955

1. Agency Form No. 37-151, "Personnel Evaluation Report"
  - a. The Personnel Evaluation Report was adopted as the Agency \* report form-- [REDACTED] (1 August 1952). "Your Personnel Evaluation Report" was an instructional guide in the use of the Personnel Evaluation Report which was issued jointly by the Office of Training and the Personnel Office.
  - b. The Personnel Evaluation Report was "established as a principal means of developing the most satisfactory working relationship between each individual and his supervisor." This evaluation was in terms of the requirements of individual's current position and his potential for long-service with the Agency. It was not a performance or an efficiency rating in the sense that the individual was to be compared with others on the basis of a predetermined adjectival or numerical scale.
  - c. On 13 May 1954 the Career Service Board decided to abolish the PER and use a new fitness report.
2. Agency Form No 37-189, "Career Selection Report"

The Career Selection Report (Form No 37-189 dated 1 March 1954) was developed by a Task Force, appointed by Career Service Board.

\* The PER was placed into actual effect in headquarters in November 1952 but was not approved by Chief, Admin Staff, DD/P for overseas use till summer of 1954.

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- a. It was designed to provide the Career Selection Board with a specialized rating report to be used when considering individuals for membership in the CIA Career Staff.
  - b. The report was to be applied only to employees during their provisional period, would not be shown to the individual rated, to be used centrally by a few high-level persons, and to be carefully controlled.
3. Agency Form No 37-189, "Fitness Report" dated 1 May 1954
- a. Agency Form No 37-189 was revised and entitled Fitness Report. Section III was added. In this section the supervisor certified he had discussed with the individual his performance and indicated whether or not he had shown the report to the individual rated.
  - b. On 13 May 1954 the Career Service Board decided that the Form No. 37-189 "Fitness Report" (1) should be used for a multiplicity of purposes; (2) applied to every individual in Agency; (3) used by local as well as Headquarters personnel officers; and (4) shown to the employee at the option of the individual supervisor.
  - c. [REDACTED] dated 21 Sept. 1954, stated policies and procedures for preparation of Form No. 37-189. This form was redesignated Form No. 45 on 1 January 1955.
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4. Agency Form No. 45, Fitness Report (Part I) Performance and Part II Potential
- a. Research on fitness reporting by the A and E Staff was conducted at the direction of Council from June 1954 to Sept 1955.
  - b. A two-part form was developed. The Fitness Report Questionnaire was sent out to about 1,500 persons in the Agency on 1 January 1955. The Council discussed at its meeting on 24 Feb 1955 the results of questionnaire (approximately 700 completed as of date of meeting).
  - c. At its meeting on 13 July 1955, the Council appointed a Task Force consisting of Messrs. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] to confer with Chief, A and E Staff. The following subjects were discussed by Council: 25X1A9a
- (1) Use of memorandum for supergrades.
  - (2) Short form for reassignment and special reports.
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- (3) Greater emphasis on performance and less on intangible personality evaluation.

d. Career Council Meeting on 15 Sept. 1955

- (1) The proposed new Fitness Report Form 45 (Part I and Part II) was presented to Council by Task Force. The only controversial matter was whether or not the Fitness Report should be shown to the employee being evaluated. It was agreed that experience had shown that an Agency-wide policy on this matter was necessary. [REDACTED] K1A9a reviewed the circumstances under which it might be unwise, operationally, for a supervisor to show a Fitness Report to the person being evaluated, especially in an overseas situation. It was recognized, however, that since the fall of 1952 it has been mandatory for the supervisor to discuss the evaluation with the subject. It was recommended and approved that the word "optional" be deleted from the instructions in Part I - Performance, and that "It is the policy of the Agency to show" be inserted. The instructions in Part II - Potential remain the same; this part of the Fitness Report would never be shown. In isolated instances, where circumstances exist which make it impractical operationally or otherwise to show the first part of the Fitness Report to the employee, the supervisor is required to so state; however, when the circumstances are altered, the report must then be shown to the employee.

- e. The publication of Form No. 45 (Part I and Part II) was held up until a question raised by the Director could be resolved. The Director asked if the new Fitness Report could be modified to include the question, "Has the need for the job which this employee has been performing changed during the period under review?" A memorandum was forwarded to members of Career Council on 26 October 1955 requesting comment concerning the advisability of including this question in Fitness Report. It was decided that it was not appropriate to require a supervisor to commit himself on the need for a particular job in his unit without consultation with his chain of command or with technical management and support personnel.

f. Career Council Meeting on 15 Dec 1955

- (1) [REDACTED] presented scheme for launching new Fitness Report - a briefing for senior executives and training sessions for senior administrative and personnel officers.

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- (2) Council approved [REDACTED] and decided not to use separate versions for headquarters [REDACTED]
- (3) Fitness Report to be prepared in triplicate: one copy filed in the Official Personnel Folder, one copy for Career Board, and one copy for action and research.
- (4) Role of reviewing official was discussed. The Council decided it was improper to require a rating official to change a report. If rating official consistently over-rated, underrated, or rated carelessly subordinates, he should be evaluated accordingly.

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- (5) Agreed that a memorandum of evaluation could be prepared in lieu of Fitness Report for supergrades.

**III. FITNESS REPORTING JAN 1956 - DEC 1957**

**1. Career Council Meeting - 17 May 1956**

The Council discussed the establishment of a "Watch List" - based on ratings on Fitness Reports. They discussed the use of term "mediocrity" and it was agreed that this term was subject to misinterpretations. The terms "marginal," "unsatisfactory," "inadequate," "incompetent," etc., are also vague. The Council recommended that criteria be developed to implement a statement such as the following: "Below CIA standards for the grade, for the following reasons." It also agreed that proper supervision and adequate documentation of substandard performance in earlier stages were essential to the effective separation of substandard employees.

**2. Career Council Meeting 10 January 1957**

- a. Chief, A and E presented proposed revisions in Fitness Report Form 45 (Part I and Part II). Council approved:
  - (1) Complete revision of section dealing with supervisory potential.
  - (2) Research to be continued till Sept 1957 with view to presenting to Council comprehensive study of fitness reporting system.
  - (3) Changes in form:

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- (a) Add Personnel serial No.
- (b) Add "Number of months under my supervision"
- (c) Revision of statements made by reviewing official with view toward making his role more specific.
- (d) Modification of Part I D - Suitability for Current Job - to ensure that it was suitability for current job not overall suitability.
- (e) Overall revision of method by which supervisor evaluates supervisory potential.

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- b. [REDACTED] suggested, (1) Making a narrative evaluation (memorandum) when evaluating senior persons down to GS-12 or GS-13 level, (2) Reducing the number of alternatives in rating since it is difficult to interpret the slight shades of meaning that individual supervisors attach to multiple statements, and (3) A simplified fitness report form.

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- c. [REDACTED] suggested requiring supervisors to take a short training course on how to prepare a Fitness Report - "that nobody be allowed to rate anyone until he had done this." [REDACTED] agreed. Mr. Kirkpatrick suggested that "reviewing officials can go back and make sure that supervisors know how to do it (prepare form)" and also suggested that fitness reporting be included in Basic Management Course.

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- d. Council agreed that Task Force would revise Form 45 (Part I and Part II) in accordance with changes proposed and conduct a pilot run with 30 people, ten selected persons from DDI, DDS, and DDP.

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- 3. Pilot run was conducted. [REDACTED] and members of Task Force developed a new Fitness Report form--one page evaluation and one page of directions. This was presented to the Council on 17 January 1958. (new features of system and form described in IV below).

The Task Force decided that a more simplified form was necessary and that the two part form was not successful. Showing Part I to the employee and not showing Part II was a source of constant trouble - many supervisors opposed this policy and did show Part II to the employee rated. It was the consensus of numerous operating and administrative officials that the information recorded in Part II (Potential) never really served to identify employees who are intellectually outstanding or those individuals who have leadership, force, and high potential for growth.

IV. FITNESS REPORTING JAN 1958 to 1961

1. Career Council Meeting 17 January 1958

a. The new form presented

- (1) Was contained in one page and places emphasis on the evaluation of the employee's performance in his current position.
- (2) Emphasized narrative evaluation to add information and justify relatively high or low ratings - potential may be described.
- (3) Innovated new system for submission of annual reports - a fixed schedule, based on grade levels, of due dates for annual reports.
- (4) Certification by employee rated that he has seen the report.
- (5) Specific evaluation statement to be made by reviewing official.
- (6) Evaluation in memorandum form may be substituted for Form No 45 for employees in Grades GS-14 and above.

b. Mr. Kirkpatrick stated that the Director asked: "Is anything being done about going back to the supervisor afterwards (speaking of employees to be separated) and finding out why he gave them good Fitness Reports?" The Director stated supervisors must mark the Fitness Reports accurately and fairly, even though they may be critical.

c. Questions arose regarding the value of having seven ratings on specific duties. [redacted] thought the scale of seven was an invitation to over-evaluation. [redacted] stated people tend to be less discriminating on a five-point scale than on a seven. The use of rating 7 in Section B "excels anyone I know . . ." was questioned.

d. The Council approved the proposed form. [redacted] stated that it was planned to introduce the form experimentally in a few restricted areas, to check instructions. If any major changes were made, the Council would be consulted.

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2. The proposed Fitness Report, Form 45 (8058) was sent to 70 selected supervisors for review and comment on 14 April 1958.

a. These supervisors were requested to prepare Fitness Reports on two employees at different grade levels and complete an attached questionnaire. It was the consensus of supervisors who participated (approximately 55) that the new form was a great improvement over previous forms.

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b. [REDACTED] studied results of test run and made following changes:

- (1) Some editorial and format changes
- (2) Section B - Evaluation of Performance of Specific Duties - Listed adjective ratings (unsatisfactory, barely adequate, acceptable, competent, excellent, superior, outstanding) rather than statements "Performs this duty in \_\_\_\_\_ manner."
- (3) Section C - Evaluation of Overall Performance
  - (a) Six statements relating performance to requirements rather than the five adjective ratings (unsatisfactory, barely adequate, satisfactory, excellent, outstanding)
  - (b) [REDACTED] felt that 7 ratings in Section B, 6 in Section C, and 5 in Section D would force the supervisor to give more thought to ratings rather than automatically rating an individual "3 or 4 all down the line."
- (4) Section D - Description of Employee
  - (a) The 5 numerical ratings were described. The statement, "It is expected that most ratings will be 2, 3, or 4" was deleted
- (5) Heading "Personal Characteristics" was changed to "Characteristics"
- (6) Characteristic "Discipline in Originating, Maintaining and Disposing of Records" was added at request of DD/P. Explanation of term added to Instructions.
- (7) Section F. Certification and Comments, changed employee statement "I certify that I have seen this Fitness Report" to

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"I certify that I have seen Sections A, B, C, D  
and E of this Report"

(These changes were discussed and informally coordinated  
with various officials.)

3. Fitness Report, Form 45 (8-58) was available to supervisors in Nov 58. The new fitness reporting system was formally put into effect on 1 January 1959.
4. Career Council Meeting 5 Feb 1959
  - a. The matter of review of Fitness Reports by the Office of Training was discussed. It was agreed that such review had been initiated as a temporary study measure and would be terminated at this time.
  - b. A change was made on Directions for Completing Form 45, Fitness Report. Paragraph 2 was changed to read, "The Fitness Report will be submitted in duplicate to the Head of the Career Service concerned. The Head of the Career Service will retain one copy and will forward the original to the Office of Personnel."